

# News Release



J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge  
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## **J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge Provide Economic Benefits Today, Conservation Benefits for Future Generations**

J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge generated \$47,254,400 in total economic activity related to refuge recreational use and 490 jobs for the nearby SW Florida community according to *Banking on Nature 2004: The Economic Benefits to Local Communities of National Wildlife Refuge Visitation*. The same report found that national wildlife refuges are major economic engines for communities, putting almost \$1.4 billion into the economy.

J.N. "Ding" Darling NWR generated \$29.93 for every dollar received for the refuge's operations and maintenance last fiscal year. Nationally, the \$1.4 billion in total economic activity related to national wildlife refuge recreational use is nearly four times the \$391 million that the Refuge System received in fiscal year 2004 for operations and maintenance. Moreover, the National Wildlife Refuge System created nearly 24,000 private sector jobs as the \$1.4 billion flowed through the economy, generating about \$454 million in employment income. Additionally, recreational spending on national wildlife refuges generated nearly \$151 million in tax revenue at the local, county, state and federal level.

The national report details findings from 93 national wildlife refuges, including the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge. The National Wildlife Refuge System encompasses nearly 100 million acres in 545 national wildlife refuges found in every state and territory in the United States. The *Banking on Nature 2004* study included money spent for food and refreshments, lodging at motels, cabins, lodges or campgrounds, and transportation when it calculated the total economic activity related to refuge recreational use.

"The J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge is proud of our role in strengthening the health and well-being of the community. We not only provide an economic benefit for our citizens today, but national wildlife refuges also ensure future generations will benefit from conserving the natural resources that are the foundation of our life and our heritage," said Refuge Manager, Rob Jess.

The J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge will hold its 16<sup>th</sup> annual festival, "Ding" Darling Days, on Oct. 9-15. The event will feature guided tours, fishing demonstrations, presentations and a live Owl program. "We invite everyone to visit the refuge this week and in the future to learn about wildlife, conservation efforts around the community and our rich cultural resources," said Jess.

For more information about J.N. "Ding" Darling NWR, go to [www.fws.gov/dingdarling](http://www.fws.gov/dingdarling).

Go to <http://www.fws.gov/refuges> to download a copy of the report.

*The JN "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge is administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service whose mission is to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.*